



Leaders in brain research join to fund better understanding of age-related cognitive impairment

The American Heart Association and Paul G. Allen Frontiers Group will fund \$43 million worth of research bringing together scientists focusing on cerebrovascular issues and neurodegenerative diseases

DALLAS and SEATTLE, May 10, 2018 — As health advances allow people to live longer, healthy aging has become an urgent frontier for research. The burden of age-related cognitive impairment – whether from Alzheimer’s Disease, vascular dysfunction, or other causes – is growing exponentially. To accelerate collaborative brain-aging research, The Paul G. Allen Frontiers Group and the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association are committing \$43 million with additional partners to co-fund a new research initiative with the goal of shedding new light on how to better prevent, detect and treat age-related cognitive impairment, including Alzheimer’s disease.

More than 5.7 million Americans currently live with a diagnosis of one of the most common forms of dementia, Alzheimer’s disease and that number is expected to nearly triple by 2050.

“Alzheimer’s, dementia and other cognitive ailments have become an enormous emotional and economic burden for our society,” says Tom Skalak, Ph.D., Executive Director of The Paul G. Allen Frontiers Group. “This new American Heart Association-Allen initiative will create new bridges and collaborations between researchers and physicians, ultimately leading to better understanding and treatment of these cognitive disorders.”

At this time, research has identified many of the symptoms and manifestations of Alzheimer’s in the brain, but not the underlying causes that could lead to prevention, diagnosis or treatment. The current rigid distinction placed between cerebrovascular diseases – such as stroke - and neurodegenerative diseases – like Alzheimer’s disease, both once considered mutually exclusive conditions, made it more difficult to understand and mitigate these disorders.

The American Heart Association and the Paul G. Allen Frontiers Group (Frontiers Group) have come together to bridge a historical divide in the scientific and medical communities between those who focus on cognitive versus vascular issues.

The Association and the Frontiers Group, together with additional contributors, including the Oskar Fischer Project, have committed \$43 million to disrupt the incremental trajectory of brain health science and open new frontiers of discovery that will improve and lengthen lives through the American Heart Association / Allen initiative in brain health and cognitive impairment. This initiative will identify and fund highly-promising teams of bioscience investigators pursuing creative, transformative ideas to move brain health and cognitive impairment science forward with greater speed.

“Bridging vascular and brain science through innovative research will help scientists shed new light on the causes or contributors to cognitive impairment and dementia,” said Nancy Brown, CEO of the American Heart Association. “The American Heart Association / Allen initiative in brain health and cognitive impairment

represents a major step forward to better understand how our brains age and is part of the Association's ongoing commitment to understand how vascular health impacts brain health and overall well-being."

The deadline for proposals is July 6, 2018. For more details on the initiative and the application process, visit professional.heart.org/CognitiveResearch.

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About the American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – the two leading causes of death in the world. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based association is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-800-AHA-USA1, visit heart.org or call any of our offices around the country. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

About the American Stroke Association

The American Stroke Association is devoted to saving people from stroke — the No. 2 cause of death in the world and a leading cause of serious disability. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat stroke. The Dallas-based association officially launched in 1998 as a division of the American Heart Association. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-888-4STROKE or visit StrokeAssociation.org. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

The American Heart Association/American Stroke Association receives funding mostly from individuals. Foundations and corporations donate as well, and fund specific programs and events. Strict policies are enforced to prevent these relationships from influencing the Association's science content. Financial information for the American Heart Association, including a list of contributions from pharmaceutical companies and device manufacturers, is available at <http://www.heart.org/corporatefunding>.

About The Paul G. Allen Frontiers Group

The Paul G. Allen Frontiers Group is dedicated to exploring the landscape of science to identify and fund pioneers with ideas that will advance knowledge and make the world better. Through continuous dialogue with scientists across the world, The Paul G. Allen Frontiers Group seeks opportunities to expand the boundaries of knowledge and solve important problems. Programs include the Allen Discovery Centers at partner institutions for leadership-driven, compass-guided research, and the Allen Distinguished Investigators for frontier explorations with exceptional creativity and potential impact. The Paul G. Allen Frontiers Group was founded in 2016 by philanthropist and visionary Paul G. Allen, and is a division of the Allen Institute, an independent 501(c)(3) medical research organization. For more information visit allenfrontiersgroup.org.

For Media Inquiries: (214) 706-1173

Alexson Calahan, Communications Manager, American Heart Association
515.994.0772 | alexson.calahan@heart.org

Rob Piercy, Sr. Manager, Media Relations, Allen Institute
206.548.8486 | press@alleninstitute.org

For Public Inquiries: (800) AHA-USA1 (242-8721)
heart.org and strokeassociation.org